

Penny, a friend and a leader in southern Minnesota who is retiring from 18 years as president and CEO of the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation.

Tim Penny first stepped into public service 49 years ago when he was elected to the Minnesota State Senate in his early twenties. From there, he would go on to serve in this very Chamber as the U.S. Representative for southeastern Minnesota, part of the district that I am honored to represent today.

Whether in or out of elected office, Tim has been a fixture in our State for decades, fiercely advocating for the region's economic growth, rural development, and community revitalization.

In his nearly 20 years leading SMIF, the organization has launched several grant projects, educational programs, and community improvement initiatives. His departure leaves behind enormous shoes to fill but also a legacy of service. It is a legacy of service that will long be remembered by all of us in southern Minnesota.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Tim on his well-deserved retirement and wish him and Sandy the best in this next chapter.

PROTECTING SOUTH FLORIDA

(Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK of Florida was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, today Republicans are jamming through a reckless bill that would wreak havoc on south Florida. In response, I introduced a series of commonsense amendments to protect American families.

Over the past few weeks, multiple hospitals, including several children's hospitals, have come into my office and pleaded with me to stop the devastating Medicaid cuts.

One children's hospital, in particular, showed me their net operating margins for 2024. They were in the negative. This bill will close them down and deprive more than 80,000 children of life-saving care.

This bill also threatens the integrity of this lifeline program, while giving tax breaks to the wealthy and well-connected and leaving our children sicker, poorer, and without healthcare.

I am offering an amendment to protect Florida's ability to fund Medicaid. I refuse to stay quiet and silent while this body attempts to rip away healthcare from our most vulnerable children who need it.

I also introduced another amendment to protect south Florida's small businesses and the workers they depend on. Immigrants are the economic engine of south Florida. Their hard work and ingenuity make the region a desirable travel destination that thousands of people flock to each year.

Unfortunately, this tax-breaks-for-billionaires bill threatens to upend the district's economy, shutter small busi-

nesses, and disrupt south Florida's tourist industry.

As it is currently written, this bill would impose excessive fees on employment authorizations sought by asylum seekers and individuals holding temporary protective status to work in the United States. At a time of unprecedented worker shortages for south Florida businesses, Congress should make it easier for companies to hire and not more difficult.

My amendment caps employment authorization fees at \$550 for asylum seekers and TPS holders. It is a commonsense change that would give south Florida businesses the flexibility they need to keep moving and to keep thriving.

I also have an amendment that strikes the visa fee for this bill. Imposing a fee on tourists at a time when U.S. tourism is experiencing instability and unprecedented lows because of reckless trade wars would be catastrophic to our economy.

Furthermore, my amendment eliminates the cruel remittance tax that will exacerbate crises in places like Haiti, Venezuela, and African countries that depend on them. Taxing this lifeline will only bring more economic instability to the Caribbean and result in increased migration to the United States.

Mr. Speaker, remittances should not be taxed but should be incentivized. I will continue to fight relentlessly to protect south Florida from this reckless bill.

□ 1030

ALS AWARENESS MONTH

(Mr. FEENSTRA of Iowa was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. FEENSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize ALS Awareness Month, to honor those who have lost their lives to this awful disease and to share my support for our fellow Americans living with ALS.

Last year, I had the opportunity to meet with Lori Hermstad from Spencer, Iowa, who tragically lost both of her daughters to ALS.

At just 17 and 26 years old, Alex and Jaci Hermstad had their lives cut short by this horrible disease.

They sadly became the youngest twin girls in history to lose their lives to FUS-ALS, an even rarer form of this disease.

Lori's resilience in the face of unthinkable loss is inspiring, and she shared with me the positive memories that she had of her brave daughters.

Jaci and Alex embraced life with remarkable strength, fearless hearts, and endless courage. They loved their families, friends, and faith, and they shared a passion for the outdoors and horses.

Jaci and Alex's bravery in the face of overwhelming odds are helping to advance science in the ALS community today. Alex's brain tissue was donated

to advance ALS research, and Jaci personally urged lawmakers and the FDA to fast-track a new personalized drug designed specifically for her rare and aggressive form of ALS.

These sisters showed us what it means to be courageous, to live with purpose, and to never stop fighting for others.

In the darkest moments, they were beacons of light.

In honor of Alex and Jaci, and every American living with or who has lost their life to ALS, we must recommit our efforts to find new cures and therapies for ALS.

We will never forget Alex and Jaci, and we will continue to fight to find a cure for this tragic disease.

CONGRATULATING DR. WENDY WINTERSTEEN

Mr. FEENSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my friend, Dr. Wendy Wintersteen, on announcing her retirement as president of Iowa State University.

Under her leadership, President Wintersteen prioritized students, led the State in research, and advanced Iowa State's incredible reputation. I have always enjoyed working with her to advance Iowa State's priorities at the Federal level.

We also worked closely on protecting CIRAS to grow manufacturing in Iowa and to bring jobs to our rural communities. She played a pivotal role in supporting our veterinary diagnostic lab and the world-renowned Ames Laboratory. She will continue to be remembered as a phenomenal leader for our Iowa State University.

Mr. Speaker, I wish President Wintersteen and her husband, Robert, all the best in this next chapter of life.

CONGRATULATING HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS ACROSS IOWA

Mr. FEENSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate high school seniors across Iowa who are graduating. This is an incredible milestone in their life that they will always remember. It marks the conclusion of 4 years of hard work, perseverance, and personal growth.

Whether they are off to a trade school, community college, a 4-year university, or heading straight into the workforce, their contributions to our communities are crucial, and their voices are needed.

They are the next generation of leaders, entrepreneurs, and innovators who will make our State and country a better place.

I especially want to congratulate my daughter, Savannah, who graduated yesterday and will be attending Iowa State University this fall.

Savannah's mom and I are so proud of her accomplishments, and I can't wait to see her future.

I congratulate the class of 2025. Now go chase your dreams.

BUDGET CUTS WILL HARM FAMILIES

(Ms. TLAIB of Michigan was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, I am here this morning to talk about what is happening here in Congress in regard to the budget proposal. I can't believe that many of my Republican colleagues, many of whom have larger numbers of folks on Medicaid, are proposing the largest cut to food assistance in the history of our country and the largest cut to Medicaid in the history of our country.

Many are actually denying that they are even cutting them. That is a slap in the face of so many people who depend on it.

Don't take it from me, Mr. Speaker, but take it from the Congressional Budget Office and many others who continue to say that nearly 14 million Americans will lose their healthcare, and thousands of people will be impacted by the proposal, the so-called reconciliation, that is going through this Chamber. We know that children and families will go hungry with this proposal.

Our residents can't simply stop being hungry or stop being sick, Mr. Speaker. For me, being on the front lines of a community that continues to get left behind with policies here in this Chamber, I know they feel very much that this budget is a betrayal to our families. If it wasn't bad enough, this all is being done to give trillions of dollars—not billions or millions, but trillions of dollars in tax breaks to the billionaire class and the largest corporations—corporations that do not need these tax breaks.

Don't worry, Mr. Speaker, there is a budget that got increased, which is the Pentagon and the defense budget. The war machine of the Pentagon budget can't pass an audit; seven audits in a row.

I read somewhere that in the most recent audit failure, the Pentagon could not account for one-half of its assets. One-half is hundreds of billions of dollars that are unaccounted for.

Many of my colleagues continue to talk about the deficit. I know this is a misnomer, but the Congressional Budget Office says that the deficit is being increased by \$3.8 trillion.

Why isn't there this outcry regarding that number?

It only seems to be an outcry when we are trying to, again, feed children who are hungry or to help make sure that people, again, through no fault of their own getting sick, get covered by Medicaid.

The budget would cut crucial programs for the poor and working families. That is a fact. It is not being made up. It is right there. It is going to take food away from hungry children. It will let people die from the lack of healthcare coverage. They are even cutting, again, trillions of dollars so that we can continue to fund a budget that can't pass an audit.

One of the amendments that I am offering this morning, Mr. Speaker, is one of the ones that says: If the Pentagon can't pass an audit, then we shouldn't be able to fund them.

I really believe no money for Pentagon waste. The amendment would prevent any funds, again, being allocated to this.

Mr. Speaker, when you talk about waste and when you talk about fraud, you look at the Pentagon budget.

However, instead, what did we do? We went to the most vulnerable. We went to the hungry, and we went to the sick. Why?

It is because many of my colleagues in this Chamber own stock in war manufacturing, Mr. Speaker. That is a direct conflict of interest. So every time they increase the budget for defense, many of them are benefiting personally from that increase.

There are no increases to helping the poor or helping the hungry, many of whom are in both Republican and Democratic districts.

Again, many of my colleagues have a lot more people on Medicaid than my district does. Yet, here we are gaslighting and misleading the public and saying: We are not cutting it. We are not doing this or that.

How is that possible in the Congressional Budget Office, a nonpartisan agency that many of my colleagues on the other side have quoted themselves, many of the people who are the so-called "I am concerned about the deficit" are increasing the deficit by \$3.8 trillion. Put that aside, the cruelty of it. I have an amendment in there that talks about the fact that we need to focus on reducing the rate of infant mortality.

Why can't we work on that? Infant mortality is a national crisis right now. We can do that by ensuring that Medicaid covers all prenatal and postnatal care.

Why can't we support that? Why can't we make sure prenatal and postnatal care are covered?

I know over 40 percent of births in our country are covered by Medicaid, Mr. Speaker. Again, I am trying to propose these amendments to highlight the fact that these are very critical programs no matter where an individual lives in our country.

We can also be ending child poverty and ensure that every child has the resources they need to reach their full potential. We should be talking about these critical issues, of funding these programs. It is our tax dollars going back to our neighbors who need it most.

Instead of voting to make life easier, they are supporting polluters, corporations, and billionaires who do not need it.

Please, I say to all my colleagues, they won't ask Speaker JOHNSON or the President why they voted this way.

They are going to ask you when you go back to your district. Please do the right thing.

RECOGNIZING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF JAMES WOOD HIGH SCHOOL

(Mr. CLINE of Virginia was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor James Wood High School in Frederick County, Virginia, as it celebrates its 75th anniversary, a proud milestone for an institution dedicated to cultivating excellence through student engagement.

James Wood High School, established in 1950 and led by Principal Paul Beable, became the sole high school serving Frederick County. Prior to its opening, the county supported five smaller high schools located in the rural communities of Stephens City, Middletown, Stonewall, Gore, and Gainesboro. Each school was named for the community it served and played a key role in educating local students. While those schools no longer exist, the communities they represent continue to grow and stand as a lasting reminder of the county's history and progress.

Named for James Wood, founder of Winchester, colonel of the Virginia Continental Militia, and friend of George Washington, the school stands on a foundation of history, leadership, and service.

Today, James Wood High School is led by Principal R. Shelly Andrews and thrives by promoting the Four Colonel C's: critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity.

Mr. Speaker, as James Woods celebrates 75 years of service to our community, we reflect with pride on its past and look forward to its continued role in shaping future generations. Congratulations to James Wood High School and all who have contributed to its remarkable journey.

CELEBRATING LORD BOTETOURT HIGH SCHOOL'S 2025 VHSL TITLE VICTORY

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the exceptional achievements of Lord Botetourt High School Lady Cavaliers basketball team, who were recently crowned the 2025 Class 3A State champions.

The Lady Cavaliers capped an extraordinary 26-3 season by toppling previously undefeated James Monroe, earning the program's fifth State title since 1995. Under the remarkable leadership of Head Coach Renee Favaro, now a two-time State champion with an impressive 117-29 record over six seasons, this team has continued to raise the bar.

The Lady Cavaliers also captured the Region 3D championship and saw standout players Madilyn Winterton and Maddie Caron named to the VHSL Class 3A All-State First Team.

This State championship adds to a storied program legacy, including back-to-back titles in 1995 and 1996 under Coach David Wheat, a 2018 title with Coach Chuck Pound, and a shared championship in 2020.

I would like to commend each of the dedicated student-athletes: Addison Naff, Reagan Meade, Abby Kingery, Jaiden Dann, Madilyn Winterton, Alicia Holmes, Madelyn Caron, Maggie Hoover, and Kayla Windsor, and extended heartfelt congratulations to